

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

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Background of the Invention

Field of Invention

This invention pertains generally to packing materials and, more particularly, to a machine and method for making air-filled packing cushions.

Related Art

Air-filled pillows or cushions are currently used as a packing material and void filler in shipping cartons and the like. Such cushions typically have two layers of plastic film material which are sealed together to form chambers that are filled with air. The cushions are usually made in continuous strings, with perforations between successive ones of the cushions so they can be torn apart.

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Objects and Summary of the Invention

It is in general an object of the invention to provide a new and improved machine and method for making air-filled packing cushions.

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Figure 1 is a plan view, partly broken away, of one embodiment of a prefabricated film material for use in making air-filled packing cushions in accordance with the invention.

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Figure 3 is an exploded isometric view of the embodiment of Figure 4 2.

Figure 4 is an operational view of the embodiment of Figure 2, illustrating the transformation of a prefabricated film material into air-filled packing cushions

Figure 4 5 is a fragmentary side elevational view of the sealing unit in the embodiment of Figure 2.

Figure ~~5~~ 6 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view of the sealing unit of Figure 4 5.

~~Figure 6 is an operational view of the embodiment of Figure 2 transforming a prefabricated film material into air-filled packing cushions.~~

Figure 7 is a plan view of another embodiment of a prefabricated film material for use in making air-filled packing cushions in accordance with the invention.

Detailed Description

The prefabricated film material 11 shown in Figure 1 consists of two layers 12, 13 of a suitable film material such as high density polyethylene or low density polyethylene. The material can be in the form of a flattened tubing which is joined together, or closed, along both of its longitudinal edges 16, 17, or it can be open along one or both edges. In the embodiment illustrated, a single elongated sheet, or strip, of film material is folded along its centerline to form edge 16. That edge is closed, and edge 17 is open.

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Operation and use of the machine, and therein the method of the invention, can best be described with reference to Figure 6. The roll of prefabricated film material 28 is placed on rollers 39, 41, with the inflation channel side of the roll ~~19~~ 28 abutting against stop 49, so that the inflation channel ~~itself~~ 19 is aligned with nip roller 44 and inflation tube 52.